

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 15, 2005. Claims 7, 8, 10, 12 and 13 are presented for examination. Claim 12 has been amended only as to two formal matters; no change in claim scope has been effected. The specification has been amended to conform the Summary of the Invention section to the present claim language. Claims 7 and 12 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 7, 8, 10, 12 and 13 were rejected solely under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,631,014 B1 (Aoshima et al.).

Independent Claim 7 is directed to an image reading apparatus that comprises a scanning member, movable along an original mounting table, that includes a reading element for reading an original image. A frame member, which has a rib, houses the scanning member. A control board is provided for controlling the scanning member, and an interface connector is connected to a signal line of an external apparatus, and is mounted on a side of the control board. Also, according to Claim 7, the control board is secured to the frame member at least at one side on which the interface connector is not mounted, and the control board is secured to the rib of the frame member.

While the Office Action asserts that every element of Claim 7 is disclosed in *Aoshima*, Applicants cannot agree. At the very least, nothing in that patent is believed to teach or suggest the recited rib. The portion of *Aoshima* cited by the Examiner as disclosing the recited securing of the control board to the rib, states that control circuit 14 is attached to the bottom surface of a body frame 1, and discusses the arrangement of flexible printed circuit board 15; nothing in that passage, however, relates to any structure that is believed to teach or suggest a rib.

as recited in Claim 7, and for at least that reason, Claim 7 is believed to be clearly allowable over *Aoshima*.

Independent Claim 12 is directed to an image reading apparatus that comprises a scanning member, movable along an original mounting table, and which includes a reading element for reading an original image and has a frame. A drive source is provided for driving the scanning member, and a frame member houses the scanning member. Also provided is an interface connector connected to a signal line of an external apparatus and mounted on an inside side surface of the frame member, the inside side surface of the frame member being located at the end of a drive direction of the scanning member. In addition, according to Claim 12, the drive source is located at a side surface of the frame of the scanning member in such manner as to move together with the scanning member, and when the scanning member is positioned at the end of a driving movable range on the side at which the drive source is located, the drive source and the interface connector are positioned between the side surface of the frame member and the scanning member, and the drive source is recited as not overlapping with the interface connector in a direction perpendicular to the original mounting table surface.

The Office Action treats Claims 7 and 12 as having largely the same recitations, which is not in all respects the case. In particular, the Office Action fails to identify anything in *Aoshima* that allegedly meets the structural features recited in the various “wherein” clauses of Claim 12, and thus fails to make out a proper rejection of that claim and of its dependent Claim 13. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 12 and 13 also is respectfully requested.

Moreover, it is noted that as *Aoshima* is commonly assigned with the present application, is prior art only under one or more of §§ 103(e), (f) and (g), and was pending (as is the present application) after November 29, 2000, and accordingly is prior art only for purposes of anticipation, and cannot be relied upon to make out a rejection for obviousness. Moreover, the priority dates of the present application are earlier than the February 7, 2000, effective date of *Aoshima* as prior art; while sworn translations of those priority applications have not been submitted, Applicants' entitlement to benefit of those priority dates with respect to the present claims is believed to be clear even from the drawings of the priority applications.

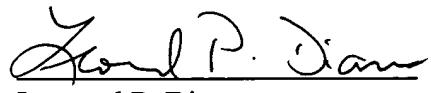
A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or the other of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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